

I/WE CLAIM:

1. For a program statement editor, a method for editing column oriented programming language statements presented to a user on a display screen, comprising:

providing a template description defining one or more statement types; and,

providing a graphical user interface ("GUI") for editing said statements individually, said GUI having one or more editable fields corresponding to a statement type of an individual statement defined by said template description, said GUI adapted to receive content for one or more of said editable fields from said user to define said individual statement.

2. The method of claim 1 and further comprising permitting said individual statement to be selected by said user for replacement from among said statements.

3. The method of claim 2 and further comprising permitting a position in said statements to be selected by said user for insertion of said individual statement.

4. The method of claim 3 and further comprising displaying a field difference indicator on said GUI for each of said editable fields whose contents has been changed by said user.

5. The method of claim 4 and further comprising one of selectively replacing and inserting said individual statement in said statements.

6. The method of claim 5 and further comprising displaying a user selectable apply button on said GUI for initiating said replacing and inserting.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said template description is an extensible mark-up language ("XML") document.

8. A system for editing column oriented programming language statements, said system having a display and an input device for editing said statements through an editor graphical user interface ("GUI"), said system comprising:

a processor coupled to said display and said input device and adapted for: providing a template description defining one or more statement types; and, providing a prompter GUI for editing said statements individually, said prompter GUI having one or more editable fields corresponding to a statement type of an individual statement defined by said template description, said prompter GUI adapted to receive content for one or more of said editable fields from said user to define said individual statement.

9. The system of claim 8 and further comprising said processor adapted for permitting said individual statement to be selected by said user for replacement from among said statements.

10. The system of claim 9 and further comprising said processor adapted for permitting a position in said statements to be selected by said user for insertion of said individual statement.

11. The system of claim 10 and further comprising said processor adapted for displaying a field difference indicator on said prompter GUI for each of said editable fields whose contents has been changed by said user.

5 12. The system of claim 11 and further comprising said processor adapted for one of selectively replacing and inserting said individual statement in said statements.

10 13. The system of claim 12 and further comprising said processor adapted for displaying a user selectable apply button on said prompter GUI for initiating said replacing and inserting.

14. The system of claim 8 wherein said template description is an extensible mark-up language ("XML") document.

15 15. A computer program product having a computer readable medium tangibly embodying computer executable code for directing a data processing system to edit column oriented programming language statements presented to a user on a display screen, said computer program product comprising:

20 code for providing a template description defining one or more statement types; and,

25 code for providing a graphical user interface ("GUI") for editing said statements individually, said GUI having one or more editable fields corresponding to a statement type of an individual statement defined by said template description, said GUI adapted to receive content for one or more of said editable fields from said user to define said individual statement.

16. The computer program product of claim 15 and further comprising code for permitting said individual statement to be selected by said user for replacement from among said statements.

5 17. The computer program product of claim 16 and further comprising code for permitting a position in said statements to be selected by said user for insertion of said individual statement.

10 18. The computer program product of claim 17 and further comprising code for displaying a field difference indicator on said GUI for each of said editable fields whose contents has been changed by said user.

15 19. The computer program product of claim 18 and further comprising code for one of selectively replacing and inserting said individual statement in said statements.

20. The computer program product of claim 19 and further comprising code for displaying a user selectable apply button on said GUI for initiating said replacing and inserting.

20 21. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein said template description is an extensible mark-up language ("XML") document.

25 22. An article having a computer readable modulated carrier signal being usable over a network, and having means embedded in the computer readable modulated carrier signal for directing a data processing system to edit column oriented programming language statements presented to a user on a display screen, said article comprising:

means in the medium for providing a template description defining one or more statement types; and,

means in the medium for providing a graphical user interface ("GUI") for editing said statements individually, said GUI having one or more editable fields corresponding to a statement type of an individual statement defined by said template description, said GUI adapted to receive content for one or more of said editable fields from said user to define said individual statement.

23. The article of claim 22 and further comprising means in the medium for permitting said individual statement to be selected by said user for replacement from among said statements.

24. The article of claim 23 and further comprising means in the medium for permitting a position in said statements to be selected by said user for insertion of said individual statement.

25. The article of claim 24 and further comprising means in the medium for displaying a field difference indicator on said GUI for each of said editable fields whose contents has been changed by said user.

26. The article of claim 25 and further comprising means in the medium for one of selectively replacing and inserting said individual statement in said statements.

27. The article of claim 26 and further comprising means in the medium for displaying a user selectable apply button on said GUI for initiating said replacing and inserting.

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28. The article of claim 22 wherein said template description is an extensible mark-up language ("XML") document.